UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1998/37
19 December 1997

Original: ENGLISH

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UN
COLLECTION

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-fourth session
Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda

QUESTION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF ALL PERSONS SUBJECTED TO ANY FORM OF DETENTION OR IMPRISONMENT, IN PARTICULAR:

TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT

United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture

Report of the Secretary-General

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GE.97-14518 (E)

I. ANNUAL REPORTS

1. In conformity with the arrangements adopted by the General Assembly for the management of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, the Secretary-General draws up an annual report to the General Assembly and, if necessary, the Commission on Human Rights, indicating the funds available, pledges made and contributions received, together with disbursements from the Fund (resolution 36/151 and document A/36/540).

2. At its fifty-third session, in paragraph 39 of resolution 1997/38 of 11 April 1997, the Commission on Human Rights requested the Secretary-General to continue to keep it informed of the operations of the Fund on an annual basis. The Secretary-General draws the Commission's attention to his annual report on the Fund, submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session (A/52/387), which is available to the Commission, and is supplemented by this report.

II. FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE FUND

3. From the total amount of US$ 3,036,054 recommended for grants by the Board of Trustees at its sixteenth session (A/52/387, para. 24), as at 31 October 1997, US$ 2,480,854 have been spent and US$ 555,200 could still be disbursed for pending grants or for urgent grants.

A. Contributions paid

4. As mentioned in the relevant provisions of the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights resolutions, the contributions for each year have to be paid before the beginning of the Board's annual session. Contributions not officially recorded (as shown in the United Nations official receipt) on the first day of the Board's session will be considered at the following session of the Board. Pledges cannot be taken into consideration.

1. Governments

5. According to A/52/387 (para. 22), as at 15 August 1997, an amount of US$ 633,905 from voluntary contributions had been received after the first day of the Board's meeting on 20 May 1997. Therefore, this amount has not been considered by the Board at its 1997 session but will be considered at the following session of the Board, in May 1998.

6. In addition, the following new contributions have been recorded since document A/52/387 was drafted on 15 August 1997. All of these contributions were intended to be for the year 1997 but since they also were received after the annual meeting of the Board on 20 May 1997, they will be available for the Board's session in May 1998.

State	Amount US$	Date	Intended for		Contr. No.
			1997	1998	
Argentina	2 000	9 October 1997	X		8
France	80 515	29 August 1997	X		19
Germany	17 442	28 November 1997	X		19
Holy See	1 000	26 November 1997	X		3
Netherlands	378 517	14 October 1997	X		16
Portugal	10 000	28 October 1997	X		2
Spain	47 015	31 October 1997	X		12
Total	536 489				

2. Non-governmental organizations

7. The Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers) has contributed to the Fund since 1987 with the following contributions:

Year	Amount (US$)
1987	502
1988	925
1989	955
1990	3 006
1995	517
1996	156
1997	105

8. Since the contribution for 1997 was paid on 7 October 1997, after the Board's meeting in May 1997, the contribution of US$ 105 will be added to the other contributions that will be allocated at the next session of the Board in 1998.

9. As of 10 December 1997 a total amount of US$ 1,170,499 (US$ 633,905 and US$ 536,489 and US$ 105) is available for recommendations by the Board at its seventeenth session.

B. Pledges made

10. Government pledges to the Fund can be made directly to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, at the United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities held in New York (the most recent Conference was held on 4 and 5 November 1997), at the annual session of the Commission on Human Rights held in Geneva, or at information meetings organized for regular donors.

11. The following pledges made to the Fund for the year 1997 have not yet been paid as of 17 December 1997:

State	Amount in US$	Amount of contr. in local currency	Announced on	Announced at/by	Contr. No.
Algeria	5 000		18 November 1997	Letter	6
Andorra	5 000		4 November 1997	PC NY*	4
Austria	20 000		4 November 1997	PC NY	15
Brazil	10 000		20 December 1994	Letter	6
"	10 000		1 November 1995	PC NY	7
"	10 000		4 November 1997	PC NY	8
Canada	17 986	Can$ 25 000	5 December 1997	Letter	15
Chile	10 000		4 November 1997	PC NY	6
Finland	193 037	Fmk 998 000	12 December 1997	Letter	15
Germany	116 279	DM 200 000	4 November 1997	PC NY	21
Greece	10 300		4 November 1997	PC NY	15
Iceland	5 952		4 November 1997	PC NY	12
Italy**	463 768		24 October 1997	Letter	6,7,8,9
Liechtenstein	7 143		4 November 1997	PC NY	10
Luxembourg	22 535	Lux F 800 000	4 November 1997	PC NY	15
Monaco	11 742		4 November 1996	PC NY***	4
"	8 711	F 50 000	4 November 1997	PC NY	5
Netherlands	515 464	f. 1 million	4 November 1997	PC NY	17
	38 660	f. 75 000	17 December 1997	Letter	18
Philippines	10 000		4 November 1997	PC NY	3
Tunisia	1 333	D 1 500	4 November 1997	PC NY	7
United Kingdom	50 310	£30 790	30 June 1997	****	8
Total	1 543 220				

* Pledging Conference in New York.

** This pledge is made for the years 1994-1998 and will be used for grants to be recommended at the 17th meeting of the Board of Trustees in May 1998.

*** A cheque of US$ 10,810 was sent by the Government on 19 March and received by HCHR on 21 March 1997 but has not yet been recorded.

**** According to information received from the Government, this contribution was paid on 30 June 1997, but has not yet been recorded.

III. MEETING WITH REGULAR DONORS AND FUND-RAISING

A. Meeting with regular donors

12. The Secretariat held on 4 December 1997, in Geneva, a technical information meeting for regular donors. On this occasion, the Secretariat presented the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly (A/52/387) and all other relevant documentation and information available on the Fund, and answered questions posed by permanent representatives.

13. On the occasion of the donors' meeting, the representative of the United States of America confirmed the intention of his Government to pay to the Fund, before the Board's meeting in May 1998, the same amount as in 1997, a contribution of US$ 1.5 million.

B. Fund-raising

14. On 10 November 1997, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Mary Robinson sent a letter to all Governments bringing to their attention the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution A/51/86 of 12 December 1996 and Commission on Human Rights resolution 1997/38 of 11 April 1997 relating to the Fund, in which the Assembly and the Commission expressed their gratitude and appreciation to the Governments that had contributed or pledged a contribution to the Fund to provide assistance to the victims in a purely humanitarian spirit.

15. She wholeheartedly supported the request contained in the above-mentioned resolutions that contributions be made annually if possible with a substantial increase in number and level in order to take into consideration the ever-increasing demand for assistance. She also drew the Governments' attention to the request of the Board of Trustees of the Fund to contribute prior to its annual meeting in May.

16. In order to meet all the requests for assistance in May 1997, the Fund would have needed more than US$ 6.8 million, whereas it had only US$ 3 million. She expected that at least the same number of requests would be received in 1998. So far, the Fund has only received contributions amounting to about US$ 1.2 million.

IV. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

17. Each year, the grants awarded correspond to the total amount which the Board of Trustees is able to recommend to the Secretary-General for allocation. In view of the insufficient contributions received (see table below), the Board avoids the practice of carrying forward a reserve from one year to the next. The Secretary-General follows this recommendation by the Board.

Year	Grants requested (US$)	Grants awarded (US$)	% granted	Additional amount required (US$)
1997	6 800 000	3 036 054	44.64	3 763 946
1996	5 618 645	2 535 500	45.1	3 083 145
1995	5 827 645	2 719 680	46.6	3 107 965
1994	5 476 959	3 698 080	67.5	1 778 879
1993	5 289 413	2 111 880	39.9	3 177 533

18. As of 10 December 1997, only US$ 1,170,499 from voluntary contributions have been received. Provided that the amount of grant requests stays at the same level as in 1997 (US$ 6.8 million), the Fund will therefore need an additional amount of US$ 5,629,501 by 30 April 1998 in order to satisfy the requests. If all contributions pledged for 1997 mentioned in paragraphs 11 (US$ 1,543,220) and 13 (US$ 1,500,000) were paid by 30 April 1998, a total of US$ 4,213,719 would be available. An additional amount of US$ 2.6 million would, however, still be needed.

V. PUBLIC INFORMATION

19. In its resolution 1997/38 the Commission on Human Rights requested the General Assembly to proclaim 26 June a United Nations International Day in support of the victims of torture and the total eradication of torture, and the effective functioning of the Convention against Torture, which entered into force on 26 June 1987.

Annex

HOW TO MAKE OR PLEDGE A CONTRIBUTION TO THE FUND

Governments, individuals and non-governmental organizations are invited to contribute to the Fund before the next session of the Board of Trustees, which is due to be held from 11 to 22 May 1998. Any contribution received after this date will be recorded in the accounts for the next year, 1999.

A. How to make a contribution to the Fund

To contribute to the Fund by bank transfer, pay to: "United Nations Geneva General Fund", c/o: Société de Banque Suisse (SBS), B.P. 2770, CH-1211 Genève 2, Suisse, account No. CO-590-160.1 in United States dollars, or account No. CO-590-160.0 in Swiss francs.

Payment may also be made by cheque, payable to "the United Nations", addressed to: Trésorerie, ONU, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Genève 10, or to: Treasury, United Nations, New York, NY 10017, USA.

In all cases, please specify the following: "Payee: United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, account CH".

B. How to make a pledge

States may announce their pledges at the Untied Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities, held yearly in New York in November.